

Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western RR.
Lackawanna Terminal (Buffalo Boat Depot)
South Park Ave.
Buffalo
Erie County
New York

HAER No. NY-63

HAER
NY
15-7-67
22 -

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

NY-63

Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Station

Location: South Park Avenue at the southern end of Main Street on the Buffalo River between Michigan Avenue to the east and the Skyway to the west in downtown Buffalo, New York

Date of Construction: 1917

Present Owner: City of Buffalo
c/o Director of Real Estate
Office of Comptroller, 12th Floor
City Hall
Buffalo, New York 14202

Present Use: Partial use of the site for cargo storage and ship repair, under lease arrangements with City of Buffalo. Otherwise property vacant since 1962.

Significance: The terminal's double deck train shed, attributed to Lincoln Bush, is considered to be significant as an early example of the innovative use of reinforced concrete.

Historian: Joan P. Schmidt, May 1979
Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority
181 Ellicott Street
Buffalo, NY 14205

HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE
DELAWARE, LACKAWANNA AND WESTERN RAILROAD STATION

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SOUTH PARK AVENUE - BUFFALO, NEW YORK

The Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western (D.L. & W.) Railroad Terminal Complex was a regionally significant structure within the context of transportation. The D.L. & W. was the oldest railroad station existing in Buffalo in 1979. It was also the last of the five stations which operated in Buffalo in 1923 at the city's zenith as a major rail center. Set on a prominent riverfront site, it retained its integrity of design.

The 8.1 acre site, which was sold by the City of Buffalo and Conrail to the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority in 1979, is bounded on the north by South Park Avenue, west by the Skyway, south by the Buffalo River and east by Michigan Avenue. The terminal complex consisted of four structures; the train shed and attached ticketing and terminal buildings to the west of the shed and a brick signal tower/power house at the easternmost site boundary.

Erected in 1917, the terminal was the work of architect Kenneth M. Murchison, with its double-deck train sheds, which are considered to be a significant early example of the use of reinforced concrete, attributed to the D.L. & W. Railroad's Chief Engineer, Lincoln Bush.

Architect Kenneth Murchison designed the shed and adjoining passenger terminal to handle both train and steamer passengers. The upper level tracks rest on a reinforced concrete deck supported by concrete columns. The six upper level tracks accommodated passenger traffic and the three lower tracks were for express shipments.

The Bush train shed was an important development in twentieth century railroad facility technology and represented an innovative use of reinforced concrete. Patented in 1904, this type of shed presented an economical alternative to the large span glass train shed. Each shed unit, composed of steel arched girders carrying reinforced concrete slabs, spanned two lines of track and half a platform on each side. The roof contained skylights for light and deep slots for the escape of fumes. The D.L. & W. in Buffalo is among the oldest surviving examples of the Bush train sheds.

The first floor of the two-story rectangular train shed (600' X 125') consisted of various walls and reinforced concrete columns (on an approximate 27' X 27' grid) that supported the second floor of the shed. The exterior walls were brick with long rows of windows alternating with wide bay track bed and elevated concrete loading platforms. The western end consisted of two large rooms and several small rooms separated by concrete block and wood-plaster walls.

The second floor was a reinforced concrete slab with exterior brick walls between steel columns on the north, south and west faces. The semi-weather-protective roof consisted of arched concrete slabs supported by arched steel beams with an extensive network of skylights along the peaks. The entire second floor was open with concrete platforms between track beds.

The ticketing and terminal buildings had steel frames with various types of masonry and architectural finishes. The two buildings consisted of several large waiting areas, surrounded by smaller utility and office areas. The waiting areas were of marble and plaster finish with cathedral ceilings and the smaller rooms were generally marble, ceramic tile and plaster finish.

The brick building constructed as a combination boiler room and signal tower dated from the same origins as its companion D.L. & W. structures, and was 36 feet wide by 55 feet long and 31 feet tall at the upper track level of the train shed. From ground level adjacent to the Buffalo fireboat location, the building was approximately 65 feet tall.

The then Erie-Lackawanna Railroad abandoned use of the D.L. & W. complex in 1962. Six and a half acres of property was eventually acquired by the City of Buffalo through non payment of taxes with the remainder going to Conrail. In the years between 1962 and 1979, the structures deteriorated badly through an unfortunate combination of neglect, vandalism, and systematic scavenging. In the terminal buildings, marble and plaster had cracked and fallen from the walls and ceilings. Also, marble had systematically been removed by scavengers for salvage. Door and window frames were broken, and the marble steps from the main staircases had been removed. In general, the ticketing and terminal buildings had been gutted, with the floors being covered by rubble from the walls and ceilings.

A December 15, 1974 article in the Buffalo Courier Express' Sunday Magazine stated that:

"The rails and crossties have been removed from its six-track, elevated train shed, many of the tiles have fallen from the high arched ceilings of its waiting rooms, vandals have broken almost every window, weeds have grown through the cracks in its roof and pigeons have become the building's principal inhabitants. Even the majestic marble staircase which curved from the main floor concourse to the second story waiting room has been reduced to rubble."

As for the signal tower, the interior, lower portion of which once served as a boiler room, had been gutted by fire and was badly deteriorated.

In 1977, the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) settled on the D.L. & W. complex as the most appropriate yard site for the maintenance and storage of rail vehicles for the Buffalo Light Rail Rapid Transit (LRRT) system. A major reason for this decision was the unique opportunity for covered storage that would be offered by the rehabilitated train shed.

However, the NFTA proposal required demolition of the ticketing and terminal building portions of the D.L. & W. site, in order to construct a complex ladder track switching area to facilitate turning trains from their mainline alignment to the individual storage bays of the train sheds. Due to the local confinement of the site caused by the Skyway, river, train sheds and South Park Avenue, these

switching movements would have to be made directly beneath the ticketing and terminal building. The permanent underpinning of complex structures this size and in their deteriorating condition and in an area requiring pile foundations, was not considered practical or economically feasible.

Likewise, in order to construct the yard and shop site, it was necessary to demolish the signal tower power house as its location would interfere with the placement of a necessary loop track.

The LRRT project underwent an extensive federal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process which included consideration of any structures having historic status or potential status. Local and New York State historic preservation officials and groups were included in this process, throughout which the NFTA was assured that the D.L.&W. was not worthy of consideration as a landmark.

In the two months following approval of the final EIS for the LRRT in December 1977, a local landmark designation for the D.L.&W. was conferred and then rescinded by municipal authorities following a public hearing. The historic question lingered, however, and in November 1978 the terminal complex was declared Eligible for Inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places by the United States Department of the Interior.

Representatives of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and all local historic preservation groups joined the NFTA and its funding agency, the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) in an on-site inspection of the D.L.&W. in January of 1979.

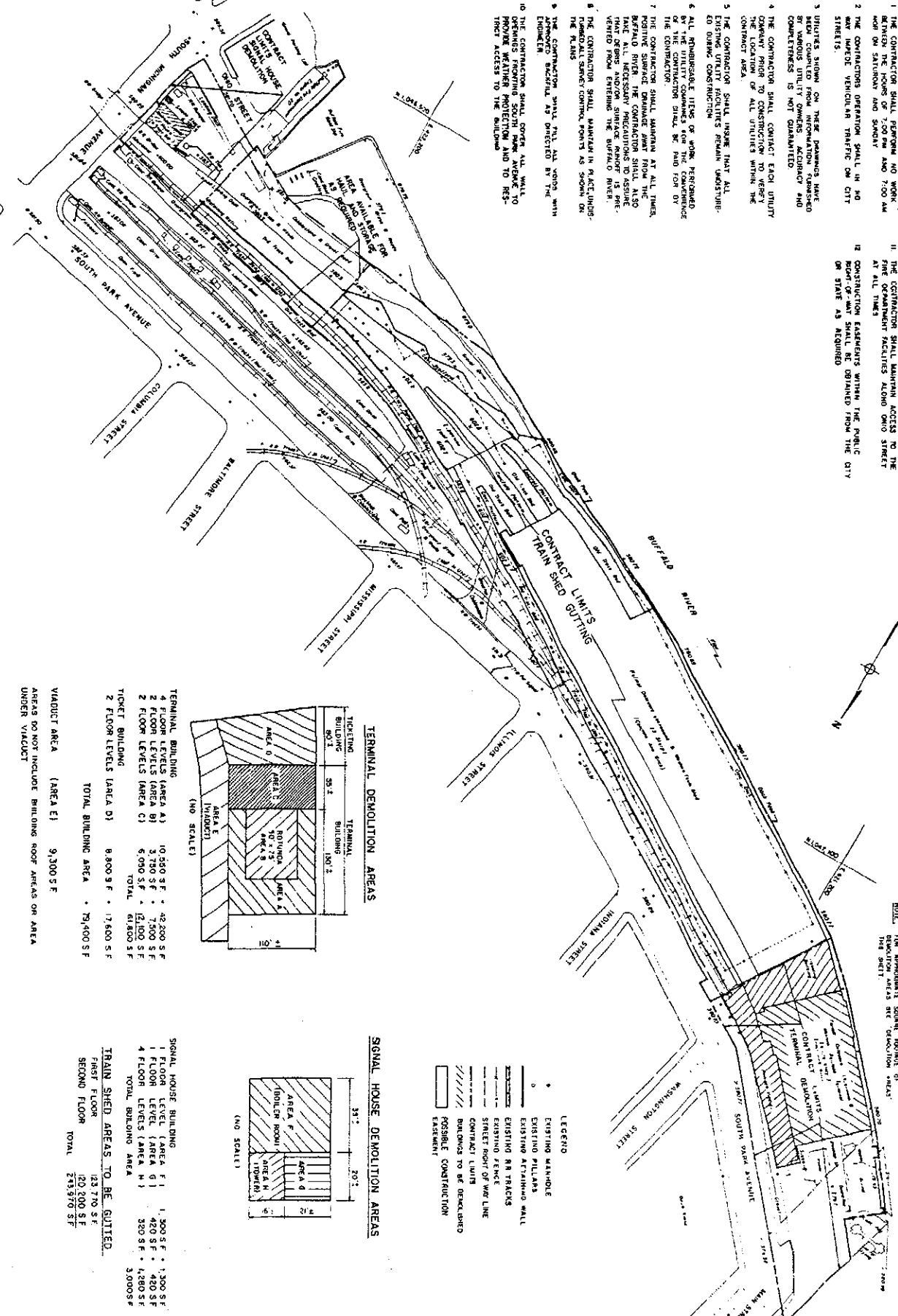
Subsequently, the NFTA advertised nationally for prospective developers for the terminal and solicited all levels of government for prospective uses for the buildings. As no proposals were forthcoming, a Memorandum of Agreement was executed and concurred in by UMTA, the NFTA, and the SHPO, with final approval granted by ACHP by June of 1979.

The Memorandum contained permission for the NFTA to demolish the two passenger buildings and the signal tower in return for assurance that the train shed would be rehabilitated and preserved in accord with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. It was further stipulated that the NFTA would consult with the SHPO on rehabilitation and that an archival record of the complex would be filed with the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) prior to demolition.

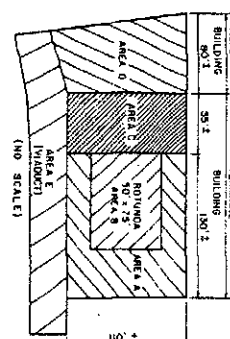
The foregoing narrative, complemented by negatives, photographs and drawings, is intended to satisfy this requirement and constitute the HAER archival record. A copy of this record has also been presented to the Buffalo Historical Society.

GENERAL NOTES

1. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL MAINTAIN NO WORK WITHIN THE ZONE OF 100 FEET AND 7:00 AM TO 5:00 PM ON SUNDAY AND HOLIDAY.
2. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL MAINTAIN ACCESS TO THE STREET AT ALL TIMES.
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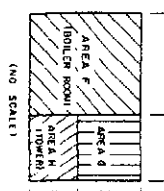


TERMINAL DEMOLITION AREAS



TERMINAL BUILDING	AREA A	AREA B	AREA C	AREA D	AREA E	AREA F	AREA G	AREA H	TOTAL
1 FLOOR LEVELS (AREA A)	10,350 S.F.	42,200 S.F.	3,750 S.F.	7,500 S.F.	6,090 S.F.	12,100 S.F.	61,800 S.F.		
2 FLOOR LEVELS (AREA B)									
2 FLOOR LEVELS (AREA C)									
TOTAL									
TICKET BUILDING									
2 FLOOR LEVELS (AREA D)									
TOTAL									
TOTAL BUILDING AREA									
VIA DUCT AREA (AREA E)									
AREAS DO NOT INCLUDE BUILDING ROOF AREAS OR AREA UNDER VIA DUCT									

SIGNAL HOUSE DEMOLITION AREAS



SIGNAL HOUSE BUILDING	AREA A	AREA B	AREA C	AREA D	AREA E	AREA F	AREA G	AREA H	TOTAL
1 FLOOR LEVEL (AREA A)	1,300 S.F.	1,300 S.F.	420 S.F.	420 S.F.	1,280 S.F.	3,000 S.F.			
2 FLOOR LEVEL (AREA B)									
2 FLOOR LEVEL (AREA C)									
2 FLOOR LEVEL (AREA D)									
2 FLOOR LEVEL (AREA E)									
2 FLOOR LEVEL (AREA F)									
TOTAL									
TOTAL BUILDING AREA									
VIA DUCT AREA (AREA E)									
AREAS DO NOT INCLUDE BUILDING ROOF AREAS OR AREA UNDER VIA DUCT									

- LEGEND**
- EXISTING MANHOLE
 - EXISTING PILLARS
 - EXISTING RETAINED WALL
 - EXISTING RR TRACKS
 - EXISTING FENCE
 - STREET RIGHT OF WAY LINE
 - CONTRACT LIMITS
 - BUILDINGS TO BE DEMOLISHED
 - POSSIBLE CONSTRUCTION
 - EXISTING

NOTE: FOR APPROXIMATE SQUARE FOOTAGE OF DEMOLITION AREAS SEE DEMOLITION SHEET.

OLAW YARD SITE DEMOLITION

SITE PLAN

HAER NY-63

BUFFALO LIGHT RAIL RAPID TRANSIT PROJECT

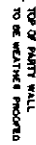
NIAGARA FRONTIER TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

MTRO CONSTRUCTION DIVISION

Urban & Tardien, P.C.

Urban Engineers, Inc.

Buffalo, NY 14203



NOTE: ALL OPENINGS
TO BE BOARDED OVER

SECOND FLOOR PARTY WALL
SHOWING ROOF SUPPORT OF TICKETING BUILDING



FORMER OLAW
TRAIN SHED
TO REMAIN.
INTERIOR TO BE

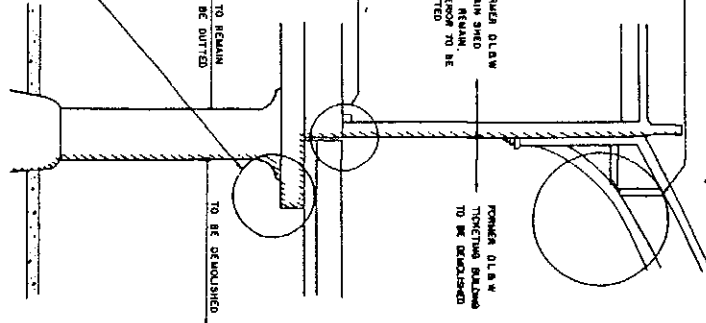
FORMER OLBY
THEFTING BUILDING
TO BE DEMOLISHED


SECOND FLOOR PARTY WALL
AND EXPANSION JOINT

2 SECOND FLOOR PARTY WALL



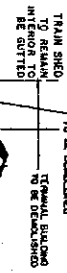
FIRST FLOOR COLLAPSED UNDER PARTY WALL



SECTION DETAIL 

DO NOT TO SCALE

NOTE: DETAIL SECTION SHOWN IS APPROXIMATE AND MAY OR MAYNOT REPRESENT ACTUAL FIELD CONDITIONS AT THE PARTY WALL



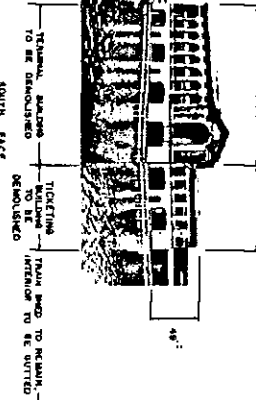
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TO THE DEMONSTRATED

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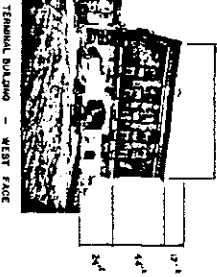


NOTE: SEAWALL NOT
BE DISTURBED

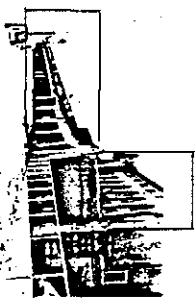
RIVER WALK ALONG SOUTH FACE OF TERMINAL BUILDING



SOUTH PAC




TERMINAL BUILDING - WEST FACE



RAILROAD WADUCT AT WEST FACE

REVISIONS		
NO.	DESCRIPTION	DATE



Olson & Tjernsten, P.C.
Urban Engineers, Inc.
Consulting Engineers

**BUFFALO LIGHT RAIL
RAPID TRANSIT PROJECT**

NIAGARA FRONTIER
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
METRO CONSTRUCTION DIVISION

D.L.B.W. YARD SITE
DEMOLITION

SECTIONS AND DETAILS
HABER NY-43

A-12-D-11	11
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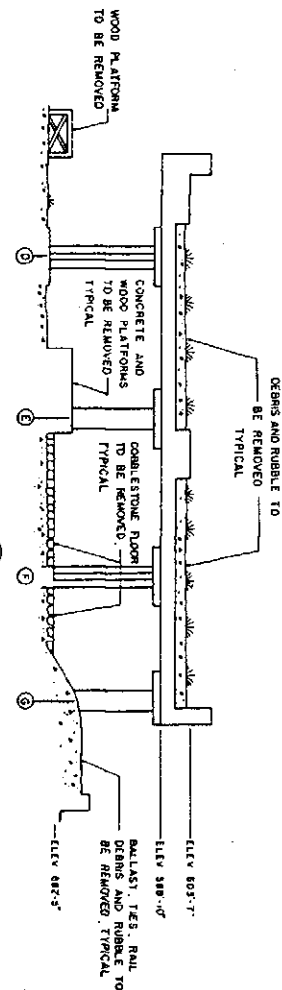
LEGEND

② INDICATES CORRESPONDING COLUMN LINE SHOWN ON PLAN VIEW DRAWINGS A-12-D-05, 06, 07, 08, 09

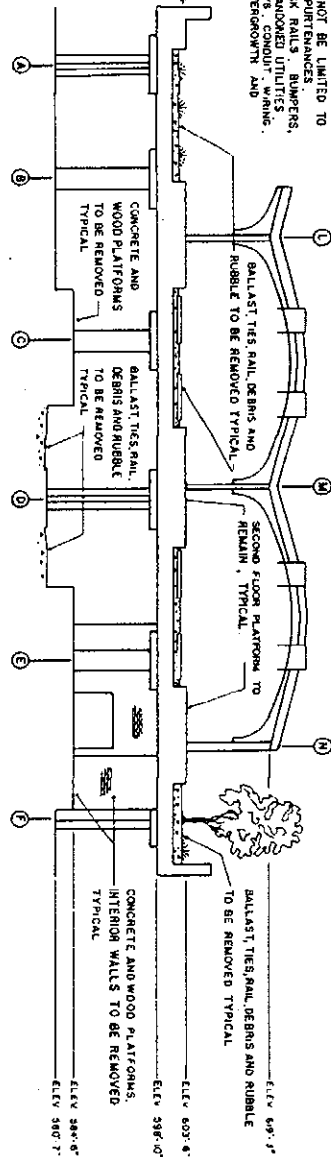
NOTES

1. DETAIL SECTIONS SHOWN ARE APPROXIMATE AND MAY OR MAY NOT REPRESENT ACTUAL FIELD CONDITIONS.
2. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL REMOVE ALL EXISTING WOODEN BLOCK AND/OR CONCRETE AND BRICKWORK EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE OR FILL MATERIAL WHICHEVER IS ENCOUNTERED FIRST.
3. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL IN NO WAY DAMAGE ANY COLUMN SUBGRADE STRUCTURE (i.e. PILES, FOOTINGS, ETC...) EXTERIOR WALLS AND PLATFORMS SCHEDULED TO REMAIN.
4. CUTTING OF THE FIRST FLOOR SHALL INCLUDE BUT NOT BE LIMITED TO REMOVAL OF ALL INTERIOR WALLS, PARTITIONS, APERTURES, BRACKETS, HANGERS, HAND RAILS, BALLAST, TRACK RAILS, BUMPERS, ROOF CONDUCTIONS, ELECTRICAL FITTINGS, RACEWAYS, CONDUIT, WIRING, SMOKE VENTS, AND ALL ACCUMULATED RUBBLE, OVERGROWN AND OTHER DEBRIS.
5. CUTTING OF THE SECOND FLOOR SHALL INCLUDE BUT NOT BE LIMITED TO REMOVAL OF ALL ITEMS IN NOTE 4 ABOVE WITH THE FOLLOWING EXCEPTIONS: CONCRETE PLATFORMS ARE TO REMAIN.

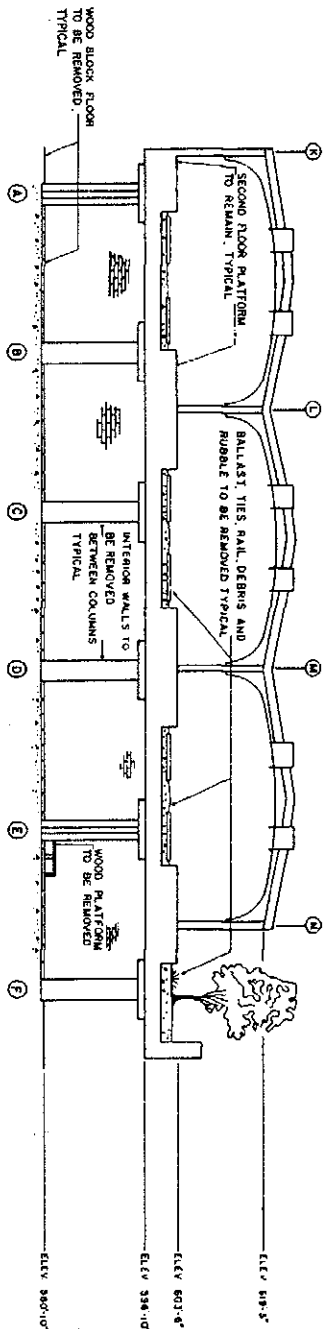
SECTION DETAIL 12



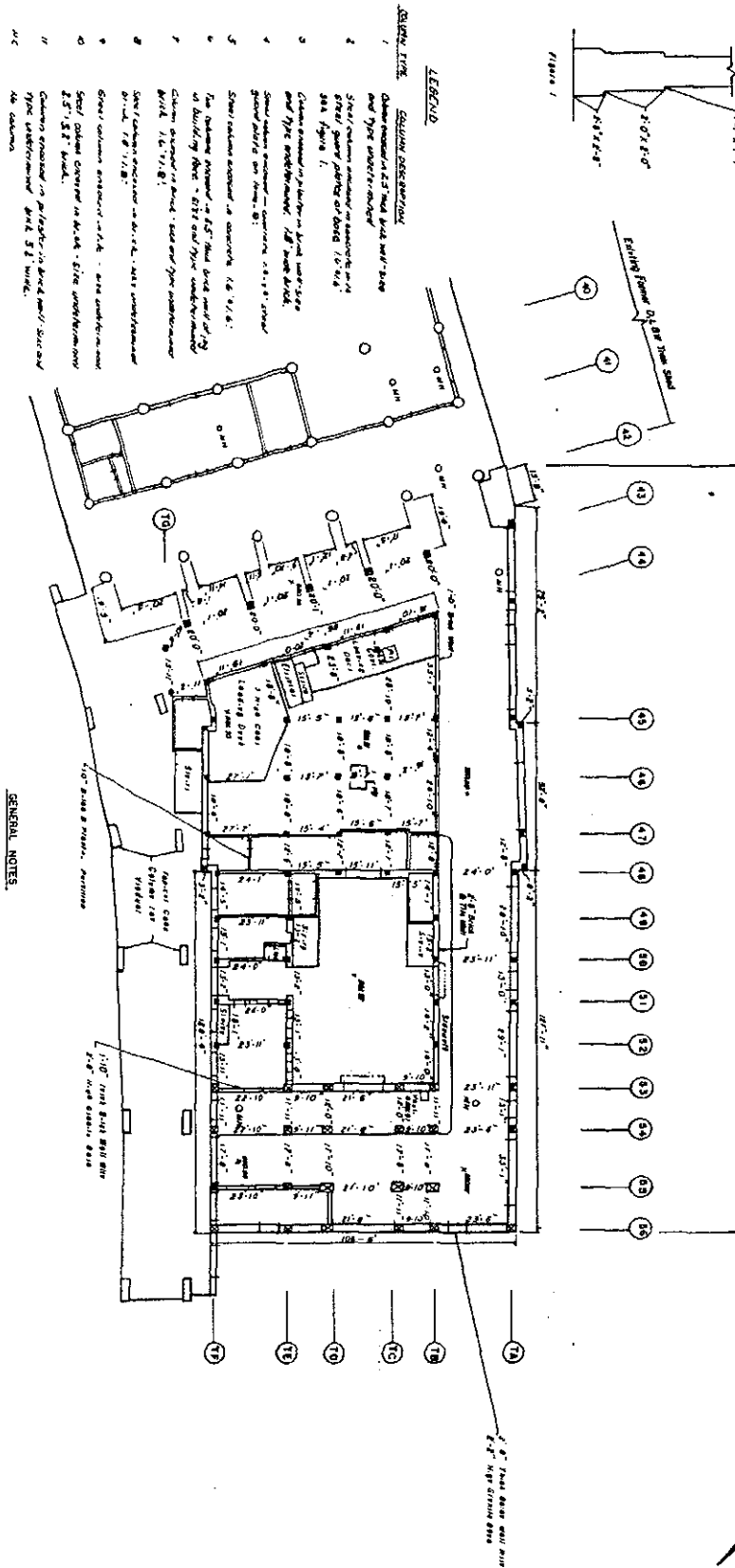
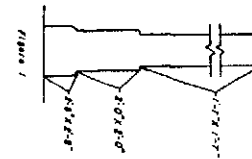
SECTION DETAIL 12



SECTION DETAIL 12



<p>REVISIONS</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>NO.</th> <th>DESCRIPTION</th> <th>DATE</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		NO.	DESCRIPTION	DATE													<p>DATE</p> <p>12</p>
NO.	DESCRIPTION	DATE															
<p>PROJECT INFORMATION</p> <p>Buffalo Light Rail Rapid Transit Project</p> <p>Madara Promote (Sponsorship Agency)</p> <p>Metro Construction Division</p>																	
<p>DESIGNER</p> <p>O'Brien & Tjordan, P.C.</p> <p>Urban Engineers, Inc.</p> <p>600 West 10th Street</p> <p>Buffalo, NY 14202</p>																	
<p>SCALE</p> <p>1" = 1'-0"</p>																	
<p>PROJECT LOCATION</p> <p>Buffalo Light Rail Rapid Transit Project</p>																	
<p>SECTION</p> <p>DEMOLITION</p> <p>HAER NY-63</p>																	

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1. ALL DIMENSIONS SHOWN ARE CLEAR OPENINGS BETWEEN STRUCTURAL COLUMNS, UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED.

2. ALL INFORMATION OBTAINED IS FROM FIELD SURVEY CONDUCTED BY OLSON & TERNZAN, P.C.

3. THIS SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED TO DETERMINE EXISTING WALL COLUMN COMPARISON OF THE FORMER DELAWARE, ILLINOIS AND WESTERN TERMINAL. IN CASES WHERE LOCATIONS WERE DOUBTFUL, IN CASES WHERE LOCATIONS HAVE BEEN APPROPRIATED ON PRESENT STRUCTURAL COMPARISON.

GENERAL NOTES

LEGEND

	EXISTING WINDOW OPENING
	EXISTING DOOR OPENING
	EXISTING COLUMN
	EXISTING MANHOLE
	SPOT ELEVATION

EXISTING D.L. & W.
TERMINAL BLDG.
FIRST FLOOR PLAN

HAER NY - 63

A-12-D-13

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Olson & Tordson, P.C.
Urban Engineers, Inc.
Consulting Engineers
Buffalo, New York

**BUFFALO LIGHT RAIL
RAPID TRANSIT PROJECT**

NIAGARA FRONTIER
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
METRO CONSTRUCTION DIVISION

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